1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I

Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes.

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves.

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being.

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food.

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark.

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits as its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[61] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[61] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throwing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax.

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *c*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave.

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, *Waniamperi*, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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764 of *Pulanimkuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Mirawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[18] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] [626] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawiliniri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[767] [18] These "workers" or *wanerar*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing.

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers".

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[83] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs.

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[84] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground

[83] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[84] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light.

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimbuwi's* [751] body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yeah, yeah*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23B). 764

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibungliatumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it. 765

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes. 761

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[86] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[86] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the meteor-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marauji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marauji* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[67]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[68]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbui*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[765] [67] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *tunaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] [68] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 (i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.
(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamuni* men and women.
(iii) The totemic songs and dances.
(iv) The *punati*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.
(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandiatapindo*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alowia*, who had assembled the *pukamuni* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamuni* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Wailu, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Waniamperi*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamuni* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamuni* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamuni* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25B).

[184] [775] [789] [63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mopaditii* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamuni* group; others said that the *mopaditii*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilanias* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilanias* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamuni* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparini*[66] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparini* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparini of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparini*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [902] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

[535] At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, *Malumerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[66] The *iramparini* of *W'aniamperi* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B).

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery.

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home.

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island.

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered.

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me".

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[88] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[89] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carrying out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned.

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[88] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[89] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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533 535 766 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

[177] The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[80]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

[114] During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the attention of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

[775] [517] Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[81] the fundamental idea is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the [775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[82]

[126] Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon drawings[83] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[80] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [81] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[82] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[83] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small figures.[15]

On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamatilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, F. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[16] The *mopaditi*, on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *c*, *c*, *c*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[15] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[16] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42B).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42B), and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[83] It is believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[84]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them ill.

[83] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 The Tiwi believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the
● 775 swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mopaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningauis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Maratjis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pitipituis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Paramanuas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Maratjis* and, to some extent, the *Mopaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Waniamperi*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

753 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell),
776 and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532
● 775
796

PLATE 47. *The Spirit People*
A, B, Spirits of the Dead, Mopaditis; C, F, Meteor-men, Papinjuwaris; D, Sea-dogs, Wankuis; E, Caves, Homes of Wankuis.

Ep. 154 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [281]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 619 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as belonging to them.

[171] 619 101 The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuŋuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of 186 648 101 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen [175] on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiŋa* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiŋa*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiŋa* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 619 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 424 775 198 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm ; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 844 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tip, and every white man who came in contact with him immediately shortened his name to the obvious diminutive form, was a person whose whole life was devoted to laughter. No English word fits him so well as the word "gay." This gaiety was not clownishness or buffoonery nor did it contain any element of malice or desire to hurt others; it was simply an enormous sense of fun. The other four brothers were in their different ways rather taut and tense personalities, or at least three were and Antonio was when away from home. Tip alone of the five brothers was always completely relaxed and unself-conscious. He was always looking on the bright side, always trying to banish tension and worry with a quip or a wisecrack, always making a joke. His favorite sentence opening was "perhaps." On one occasion a camp I was in was badly scared by a ghost appearing in the middle of the night in the midst of the camp fires. Everybody, anthropologist included, huddled around their fires, not daring to look and yet unable to abstain from furtive peeps. Finally the apparition seemed to have gone and there were low whispers from various firesides of, "Has it gone?—I think it's gone—it doesn't seem to be there now." "Perhaps it's gone to Port Darwin to see a movie," said Tip, loudly, and immediately the tension was broken and the whole camp shouted with laughter. On another occasion a group of natives who were escorting an elderly and venerable French priest through the bush, were chased by a herd of wild buffalo[4] and forced to take refuge in the nearby trees. The buffalo pawed and snorted under the trees and a discussion took place as to how to frighten them away. Shouting, swearing and throwing sticks failed to frighten them off. "Perhaps, Father," said Tip, convulsed with laughter at the whole proceeding and addressing the priest, "perhaps they would go away if you cursed at them in the Church language [i.e., Latin]."

There are several important things to notice about Tip's humor. One is that much of the time he used it as a means of initiating action, as in the ghost incident where he took the lead over several senior men in dissolving the tension, or in the Warner incident,[5] where the initiating suggestion to play a very old and hackneyed joke came from him. In a culture that looked with disfavor on young men speaking out of turn, Tip was always speaking out of turn, but because such speaking was always in a joking form, few if any natives recognized it as being out of turn. From certain points of view we might say that Tip had found, through his gaiety, a tool which he used to make his presence felt without exciting social disapproval because of his lack of age. But that statement makes the whole matter sound far too conscious and deliberate. Again we face a constantly recurring problem—how much of "personality" is status-dictated and how much "natural"? Will increasing years and dignity cause Tip to cease laughing at life and its problems? There seem at least two grounds for strongly doubting it. One is the admittedly subjective but strongly held view that Tip didn't laugh and joke and come out with his incongruous "perhaps" to achieve effect or as a means to the end of social recognition, but because he genuinely and naturally enjoyed his own humor. Too many nights have I dozed off to sleep listening to Tip gurgling with sup-

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[1] has a number of cult centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

Clan Relationship. To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo, *kimiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans. Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter, wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

Marriage Law. The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:

		1		2
A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[1] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *eminker* of the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yataraka*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep) and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's " shade " would cause that person to die and then run away with his " shade." To mention the name of the newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary word such as " honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father, father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—*Murakmani*; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally, *Makagala*, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise, both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual. Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—*wanerterima*; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*—child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *piramuruka*—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungala*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pilukwen*—widower; *mentuygini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is pregnant; *indjula*—a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a consequence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

601 23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intamili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboke*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

582 614 Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system. Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

614 [342] [775] From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*pitapitasi*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and, if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation.

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives.

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident.

Exchange Between Local Groups

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous.

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi C[illegible]0

disembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. "*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits
●775 of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play
in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and
their *mobudities*, should they die and be buried in the country, for
as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot
with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters
found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick,
the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that
[223]